Michiel Stekelenburg Catharsis

Catharsis: *the process of releasing, and thereby providing relief from, strong or repressed emotions.*

Guitarist and composer Michiel Stekelenburg is no stranger to the modern jazz scene (All About Jazz previously wrote: "Stekelenburg shines as a composer and guitarist, and his fine band never fails to deliver"). After releasing albums with a quartet (Hypnos, 2011), a quintet (Layers, 2016), and a trio (Onoda, 2022), Michiel now introduces a new 7-piece band: **Catharsis**.

Having previously reached #1 on the iTunes Jazz Charts with his last album and being among the top 10 best jazz guitarists in the Benelux, Michiel returns with a new septet and a fresh sound. Catharsis comprises seven musicians, each pushing the limits of thought and musical expression, providing a fresh outlook on the conventional septet arrangement. From a broad musical spectrum, jazz, rock, indie, and modern composed music are melded together, with the modernly crafted three-part harmony of the horns playing an essential role in the overall sound. Expect fiery improvised solos, supported by ethereal textures and dynamic compositions. On the other hand, they embrace a generous dose of raw energy!

Personal Theme
"Looking back on my life so far, I come to the conclusion that I have unconsciously struggled with a deep sensitivity. There have been moments when I experienced the world around me so intensely, yet simultaneously felt unable to express it. It seemed as if I were trapped in the eye of my inner storm.
My music originates from the urgent need to unveil these suppressed feelings and emotions that bubble deep within me. I found a way to embrace the complexity of my inner world and, at the same time, share it with the external world."

In the midst of my musical journey, the intriguing question emerged:

How can I embrace my sensitivity and emotional depth while remaining true to my masculine identity?

A question that, in a society that often relies on traditional norms of masculinity, is a challenging and necessary exploration.

"This album is not just a collection of pieces; it is a journey through my soul, a quest for balance between my inner world and the expectations of the external world. I invite you to travel along and explore the boundaries of emotion and identity together. I hope that this musical exploration also touches your heart."

Bandmembers

Jesse Schilderink is a Rotterdam-based saxophonist and composer, mainly active in the scene of instrumental and improvised music. Being part of a large number of projects and bands, Jesse shows a rapidly growing presence in the Dutch musical landscape. He's part of a variety of groups, such as the Peter Somuah Group, Dutch Jazz Collective and the Rotterdam/Trondheim Collective.

Tom Ridderbeekx is part of a generation of young and exiting jazz musicians in the Netherlands. He attended some of the world's renowned conservatories in Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Berlin and Philadelphia. Tom is known for his lyrical improvising, his specific sound and his songs that will stick with you for a long time. He's one of the Netherlands' most appealing young horn players.

Odei Al-Magut Born in Russia, this versatile trombonist studied in Amsterdam and Manhattan. Odei's playing combines modern jazz, with urban and mid-eastern vibes and creates a unique sound that fits perfectly with Catharsis! At its core, his playing is all about the spirit of freedom.

Guitarist and Catharsis' bandleader, **Michiel Stekelenburg** is not only recognized as a guitarist but also as a composer. Releasing three albums under his name, of which the latest reached #1 on iTunes, he has already made a mark in the Dutch jazz scene. Two of his compositions have even been included in the Dutch version of the Real Book. His tasteful blend of modern jazz with influences from rock and indie music has led to notable collaborations with musicians such as bassist Damian Erskine and Kenny Wheeler. Michiel is ranked among the top 10 best jazz guitarists in the Benelux.

Sjoerd van Eijck is one of the most talented pianists of the new generation. His lyrical playing style is characterized by a classical approach to the piano, where the pursuit of beauty can be found in every note. Sjoerd won an Edison award with the Mudita trio. He is currently making waves with his Oak trio and he's part of the new band of trumpet icon Eric Vloeimans.

Thomas Pol is a highly sought-after bass player who is well known in the Dutch and international scene. In addition to studying Jazz, he also pursued Classical music. His spontaneous, strong and grooving style is what defines him as a player. As a sideman he is the strong foundation an ensemble needs and as a leader he shows great potential with his debut album 'In America'. Currently, he performs with Benjamin Herman and the classical ensemble Pynarello.

Jasper van Hulten is a gifted musician and drummer. He toured the world with bands such as those led by Eric Vloeimans, Wolfert Brederode, and Wouter Hamel. Jasper is a very active and versatile player, always looking for new ways to approach music and his instrument. His goal is to serve the music with open ears, and to blend in with the right sound and feel.